

# TUNNEL INQUEST ENDS; STATE INQUIRY ON.

District-Attorney Jerome Scores the New York Central for Destroying Records—Withdraws in Anger After a Squabble with Moss.

General Manager Franklin, of the New York Central, was the first witness to-day, at the coroner's inquest into the tunnel disaster.

"Mr. Franklin," asked District-Attorney Jerome, "have you looked up the reports of engineers who have over-run the signals in the tunnel?"

"I find that the reports were all destroyed up to 1900."

"Why were they destroyed?"

"We didn't think it necessary to keep them."

"I think it very significant that they were destroyed."

Mr. Paulding, the lawyer for the company, jumped to his feet and said that the District-Attorney's insinuation was unjust.

"It is not fair to question the veracity of this witness. He has answered why the reports were destroyed."

"Significant," says Jerome.

"I repeat that it is significant that these reports showing the adequacy or inadequacy of these signals should have been destroyed," said Mr. Jerome.

"In regard to the destroyed records, here is a railroad company liable for indictment for manslaughter or maintaining a nuisance. Have I got to accept as gospel truth what this witness for the railroad says, even though he is under oath?"

"These records have been destroyed. I have a right to show that they might have been destroyed for a purpose in order to get rid of data which would prove that there was just as much neglect under a new system as the old."

"We will accept Mr. Cadogan's testimony as the highest authority," said Mr. Paulding hastily.

Newman on the Stand.

President Newman then took the stand. He said he had been connected with railroads for thirty-two years, recounting the various positions he had held.

"To the officers and directors of the Harlem road participate in the management of the road from Fifty-second street to Mott Haven?"

"Not except in so far as provided in the joint contract."

Franklin Responsible.

"Over that stretch of road Supt. Franklin is responsible."

"He has full charge of everything except maintenance and construction. He has entire charge. He can recommend improvements, construct repairs."

"Is it his duty to repair signal lights if they are not adequate?"

"He can call for changes."

"Do you as a railroad man think it im-

portant for railroad engineers to see signals?"

"That is a department I know nothing of," returned Mr. Newman, evasively.

"Do you esteem your master car builder a competent man?"

"In his special line."

Cars Could Be Improved.

"He said that cars could be improved with a view to safety for an additional cost of 20 per cent. Do you believe this?"

"I have no reason to doubt the gentleman's statement. His is not the actual but approximate estimate."

Mr. Newman went on to say that cars were being built all the time with the latest safety appliances. Mr. Jerome then took up the presentation of the Grand Jury in 1891, which said the accident was due to the inability of the signal to show that there were four and one-half feet of boiler between the fireman and engineer and that it was an impossibility for him to hear the fireman call out.

"I also wanted to show that the green light was higher on the fireman's side than the engineer's, that it was three hours before the brakes were tested and that natural leakage would result in their not being set, that when in the tunnel the engineer had to lean out of the cab window to pick up his signal and that he could not be expected to hear his fireman."

At this point Mr. Jerome interrupted and said:

"Now, Mr. Coroner, if Mr. Moss is going to sum up I will sum up also. I am speaking by the courtesy of the Coroner. I was asked if I had anything to say, but the District-Attorney is looking for the indictment of this engineer, and so is the railroad company."

"That is unfair to the company," put in Mr. Paulding.

Jerome Quits in Anger.

Mr. Moss apologized to Mr. Paulding, but ignored the District-Attorney. "I don't want to stand here all day and be insulted," cried Mr. Jerome, "and don't be insulted so easily," retorted Mr. Moss.

"It is easy for any one as ill-bred as you to insult any one," said Mr. Jerome, angrily. "I withdraw from the case."

"This court is adjourned until 2 o'clock," cried Coroner Scholer, and that closed the squabble.

After the adjournment Mr. Moss said engineers do see the signals because of smoke and steam.

"Did you hear of that?"

"In a general way."

"But you know that engineers run past signals?"

"Yes, they do that every day."

"How?"

"Well, sometimes, because they don't see them, and other times they are absent-minded."

Blames the Engineer.

"As a practical railroad man to what do you attribute the recent accident?"

"The engineer who failed to stop the train."

"Didn't he see the signal?"

"Suppose he didn't?"

"We might go on making a thousand suppositions."

"But that is what this man says, that smoke and steam obscured the signals?"

"No man can tell what caused that man to fail to stop his train."

"Well, what are we going to do to stop these accidents?"

"We are considering methods."

"What are they?"

"Plans for relieving the congestion during the busy hours. Anything that will relieve congestion will add to safety."

Mr. Newman was then excused.

Charles L. Addison, Superintendent of Transportation on the Long Island Railroad, was then called. Mr. Jerome asked:

"If during nine or ten years engineers constantly ran by signals because they could not see them on account of the fog and steam and smoke, would you not deem it your duty to provide some improvement in the shape of an audible signal or some device?"

"I would," said Supt. Addison.

Jerome and Moss Wrangle.

After finishing with the witness, Mr. Jerome said he had nothing further to say, that the proceedings were entirely irregular, that the Coroner had never presided at a trial against Wiskar, and that the man had been falsely imprisoned. These facts, however, were set forth in a statement he made to the Coroner earlier in the day.

## EXPERT FOUND SIGNALS HIDDEN.

The State Railroad Commission's investigation of the tunnel disaster was resumed to-day in the Fifth Avenue Hotel.

The first witness was Charles L. Addison, Superintendent of Transportation on the Long Island Railroad. He was called as an expert in regard to signals.

At the request of the New York Central, he said, "I examined the signals in the tunnel on Wednesday last. The mechanism was in good condition, everything regarding the signals seemed to be up to date. I can suggest no improvement—at least not at present."

Can Suggest No Plan.

"Can you suggest any scheme of terminal relief while the electric plan of improvement is being carried out?"

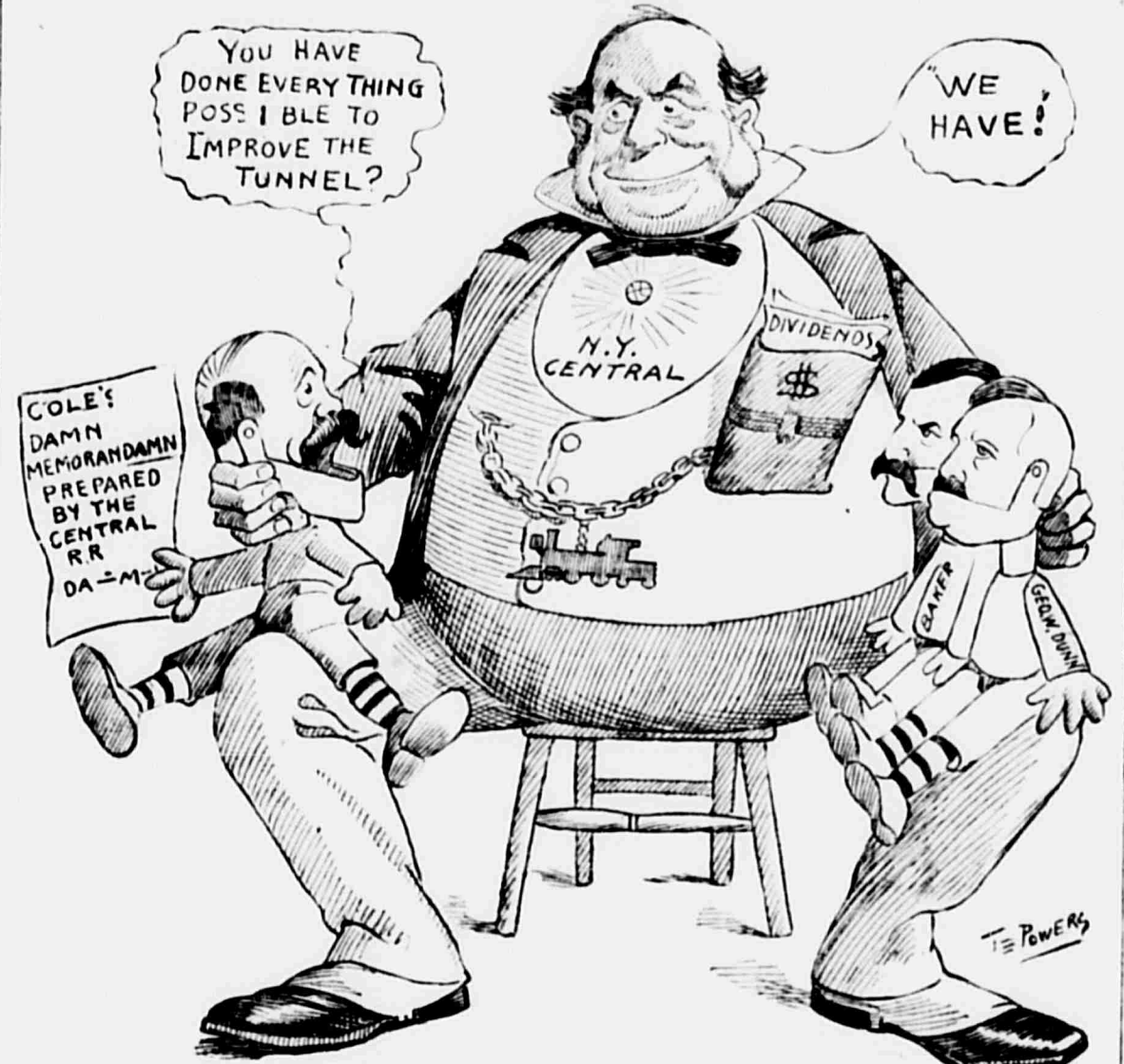
"No; I can think of nothing."

Lawyer Shearn, representing the citizens of New Rochelle, asked the witness as to the weather conditions on Wednesday. Mr. Addison said that the atmosphere was well saturated. He conducted his examination between the hours of 10:30 and 12:30, not during the "rush hours."

"Did you find the signals visible?"

"They were not invisible, but whenever trains passed the signals were temporarily obscured. For a short period they could not be seen on account of the steam and smoke."

THE GREAT AMERICAN VENTRILOQUIST AND HIS PUPPETS, THE RAILROAD COMMISSION.



President N. Y. C. RR. Co.—Now, Ashley, ask me some questions for these gentlemen.

Ashley—Say, Mr. President, the lights in the tunnel are all right, ain't they?

President—Why to be sure they are.

Ashley—Taint our fault if people get killed in the tunnel, is it?

President—No, indeed. Now sing a little song for the gentlemen and then I will put you back in the box.

Mr. Addison said that as soon as the number of trains passing through the tunnel was reduced the obscurity of the signals would be correspondingly reduced.

He said that steam rather than smoke caused the vapors in the tunnel.

William Barclay Parsons, chief engineer of the Rapid Transit Commission, was asked what methods of improvement could be introduced in the tunnel.

He said:

"There are only two methods of improvement, to my mind. One is to take the roof off the tunnel, the other is to do away with steam."

Mr. Parsons went on to say that the Rapid Transit Commission had submitted a plan for joint connection between the Central and the Rapid Transit at Forty-second street, and that it had been refused.

"The chief objection," said Mr. Parsons, "was that the Central did not wish to waive any rights as to constructing a road underneath its property."

Chief Engineer Wilgus of the New York Central had testified yesterday afternoon that the Rapid Transit Tunnel would be forty feet below the level of the ground. Mr. Parsons, however, stated that the Rapid Transit would be only twenty feet and six inches below the surface, measuring from the base of the rails.

The testimony was regarded as most important, as showing that

Supt. McCoy Admits that Single-Block Plan Could Be Used, but Says It Would Congest Traffic in the Tunnel.

## NEW YORK CENTRAL DESTROYED RECORDS

District-Attorney Jerome—The other day, Mr. Franklin, I requested you to bring your reports showing cases where engineers had run past signals in the tunnel since 1891. Have you brought them?

General Manager Franklin—I have not.

Jerome—And why not?

Franklin—Because they have been destroyed.

Jerome—You knew of this presentation of the Grand Jury pronouncing the signals in the tunnel inadequate, and still you destroyed every bit of record which could show whether the changes which had been made subsequent to the presentment had remedied the evil?

Chief Engineer Wilgus had misrepresented the facts.

Mr. Parsons testified that the scheme of the New York Central for enlarging its yard room would make only a temporary relief. Questioned as to the feasibility of making connections between the New York Central and the Rapid Transit Mr. Parsons said:

"It would be both practical and feasible to make the connections."

"What can be done," asked Joseph Woods, of the Mount Vernon Board of Trade, "for a permanent relief from present conditions?"

Favors Overhead Trolley.

"I can see no relief," replied Mr. Parsons, "except through electric motors for through trains."

"What method would you suggest?"

"I would suggest the adoption of an overhead trolley. I think that it would be feasible as the conditions now exist in the Grand Central yard."

Continuing, Mr. Parsons said:

"I do not think it would pay to light the tunnel by electricity; it seems to me that for the advantage of the engineers a dark tunnel is better than a light one. With a dark tunnel they can see the signals better."

Silent on World's Plan.

Before he left the stand Parsons was asked in regard to the one-block plan submitted by The World. He was non-committal in his answer. All that he was willing to say was that it depended entirely upon the number of trains running in and out of the tunnel.

Charles H. Platt, Superintendent of the New York, New Haven and Hartford

Railroad, admitted freely that soft coal was used by the railroad, but said that it was not used in the tunnel. He asserted that it was only used in connection with starting fires.

Mr. Platt, after a rigid cross-examination by Mr. Shearn, evaded nearly every question that was asked of him.

To most of the interrogatories he replied, "I do not know."

Finally Col. Baker, of the Railroad Commission, came to Mr. Platt's assistance, saying: "Superintendents are not supposed to know the details of construction, and there are many other things in regard to the railroads which they do not know."

Mr. Shearn replied: "Yes; that is very evident."

World's Plan Discussed.

E. B. McCoy, superintendent of the Hudson River Division of the Central Railroad, was the next witness. Commissioner Baker asked him if it were not possible to adopt The World's plan for making the tunnel safe by making it a single block.

"No, trains come too quickly in the rush hours to permit it," he said. "To make the tunnel a two-block system would require a train congestion of a single block only half. From 7:30 to 8:30 there are thirty-five south-bound trains coming in, not counting the movement of shop trains."

"Would it not be possible to run the tunnel as a single block?" urged the Commissioner.

"No. It would result in a serious congestion of traffic. I want to explain, however, that the single-block plan would be put into effect, but it would result in a most serious congestion."

The Board then revealed its own plan. Commissioner Baker asked if it would be possible to run the suburban trains to the freight station at the foot of West Thirtieth street and discharge the passengers there instead of at Forty-second street.

"Not at present. The trackage we have at Thirtieth street now is none too great for our heavy freight traffic, and we could not handle any passenger trains there at present."

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## Twenty-sixth Annual Statement January 1, 1902

### ASSETS

Bonds and Mortgages	\$11,163,737 93
Real Estate	10,075,681 22
R. R. Bonds and Stock (Market Value)	14,251,857 50
Municipal Bonds (Market Value)	5,077,992 03
U. S. Gov. Bonds (Market Value)	112,000 00
Cash in Banks and Office	4,285,411 80
Interest and Rents, due and accrued	362,020 30
Loans on Collateral Securities	915,000 00
Loans on Policies	728,189 34
Framiums Deferred and in course of collection (net)	1,658,681 21
Total	\$48,630,571 33

### LIABILITIES

Reserve on Policies	\$41,012,766 00
All other Liabilities	753,200 09
Surplus to Policy-holders	6,864,605 24
Total	\$48,630,571 33

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